

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 156067

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT USUN 2250 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN,
BRUSSELS, DAR ES SALAAM, KINSHASA, LAGOS, LIBREVILLE,
LONDON, LUSAKA, MAPUTO, AND PARIS DATED JUNE 2, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02250

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:XGDS-1

TAGS: PINS, AO, CE, WA

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ANGOLAN PRIME MINISTER

REF: STATE 138716

1. AMBASSADORS YOUNG AND MCHENRY ACCOMPANIED BY MISOFFS
PETREE AND BLACKEN MET WITH ANGOLAN PRIME MINISTER
NASCIMENTO, FOREIGN MINISTER JORGE AND PERM REP
FIGUEIREDO ON JUNE 1 FOR AN HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES
IN THE PM'S SUITE AT THE UN PLAZA HOTEL. NASCIMENTO'S
INTERPRETOR WAS ALSO PRESENT. THE SHABA INVASION,
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ANGOLA'S SECURITY CONCERNS, AND NAMIBIA WERE CHIEF
TOPICS OF CONVERSATION.

2. AMBASSADOR YOUNG OPENED THE MEETING WITH PM
NASCIMENTO DRAWING ON THE POINTS IN REFTEL TO STRESS THE
U.S. CONCERN ABOUT THE ATTACK FROM ANGOLA BY KATANGESE
INTO SHABA. HE DESCRIBED THE REACTION IN THE U.S.

TO THE SHABA ATTACK, THE BELIEF THAT THE CUBANS, ANGOLANS AND KATANGESE WERE LINKED TO EACH OTHER, AND THE CONSTRAINTS THAT EVENTS SUCH AS SHABA PLACED ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF U.S. - ANGOLAN RELATIONS.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED A PROPENSITY BY THE U.S. TO IDENTIFY ANGOLA WITH THE VIOLENCE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT FEW NATIONS IN AFRICA HAD EXPERIENCED THE DEGREE OF SUFFERING WHICH ANGOLA HAD EXPERIENCED. CONSEQUENTLY, ANGOLA WAS STRONGLY MOTIVATED TO AVOID VIOLENCE. ANGOLA WANTED TO DISCUSS ALL PROBLEMS -- NAMIBIA, ZIMBABWE, SHABA -- AND WANTED TO RESOLVE THEM BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. THE EVENTS IN SHABA DID NOT HELP REINFORCE THE POSITIONS OF PROGRESSIVE COUNTRIES. SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE DISCUSSION HE RETURNED TO AND STRESSED ANGOLA'S NEED FOR PEACE AND ITS DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES.

4. CONCERNING THE KATANGESE IN ANGOLA, NASCIMENTO DISCLAIMED ANGOLAN RESPONSIBILITY. HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION CONVEYED -- BUT NOT IN SO MANY WORDS -- A SENSE OF HELPLESSNESS ABOUT THE SITUATION. HE SAID ANGOLA HAD 200,000 ZAIRIAN REFUGEES, MOST OF WHOM WERE NEAR THE ZAIRIAN BORDER. THE GOA HAD TRIED TO MOVE THEM BACK FROM THE BORDER, BUT HAD ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES. HE ALSO ALLEGED THAT THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS WERE A PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS THERE. IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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CORRUPT. IT WAS ROBBING ITS OWN PEOPLE. THE ZAIRIAN PEOPLE WERE UNHAPPY AND THE RESULT WAS DISINTEGRATION AND CHAOS. THE PRESENCE OF THE FRENCH AND BELGIANS WOULD ENABLE MOBUTU TO CONTINUE HIS PILLAGING FOR A FEW MORE YEARS.

5. NASCIMENTO PROFESSED GREAT WORRY OVER THE TREND OF EVENTS IN AFRICA. HE FEARED THAT THE COLONIAL POWERS WERE CREATING AN ALLIANCE OF CLIENT STATES, AND THEREBY CREATING MILITARY BLOCS IN AFRICA. THEY APPEARED, HE SAID, TO BE INTERESTED IN CREATING A MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN AFRICA SIMILAR TO THAT EXISTING IN EUROPE. THE U.S. SEEMS TO WANT TO PLACE PEOPLE IN ONE BLOC OR ANOTHER. ONE COULD CONCLUDE THAT THE U.S. WAS NOT TRYING TO STOP CONFLICT, BUT WAS ENCOURAGING IT. THIS ANALYSIS, HE SAID, WAS BASED ON TALK OF U.S. AID TO FORCES ACTING AGAINST THE GOA AND ITS SUPPORT FOR COLONIALIST FORCES. THESE THINGS ENCOURAGE VORSTER TO INVADE ANGOLA AGAIN AND AGAIN.

6. NASCIMENTO SAID THAT EVERYONE SEEMED TO BE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE CUBANS, WHILE IGNORING THE ATTACKS OF

SOUTH AFRICA ON ANGOLA. THE CUBANS HAD BEEN INVITED BY ANGOLA TO HELP DEFEND IT. IN ADDITION, THEY WERE HELPING TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY.

7. AGAIN ON THE SUBJECT OF ZAIRE, NASCIMENTO SAID THE ANGOLANS HAD HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOZ, BUT THE ZAIRIANS HAD NOT STOPPED ENCOURAGING AND ARMING GUERRILLAS WHO ARE ATTACKING ANGOLA. HE SAID THAT ATTACKS FROM THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND INDIRECTLY FROM ZAIRE, MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR ANGOLA TO MAINTAIN NON-ALIGNMENT. THE MORE THAT ANGOLA HAD TO RELY ON OUTSIDERS FOR SECURITY, THE GREATER WOULD BE THE DANGER OF SLIDING INTO AN ALIGNMENT. HIS GOVERNMENT HOPED TO AVOID ALIGNMENT. IT WOULD, HOWEVER, BE SOCIALIST. HE STRESSED AGAIN ANGOLA'S
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NEED FOR PEACE INTERNALLY AND ON ITS BORDERS. ANGOLA DID NOT WANT TO REMAIN LIKE ISRAEL WITH HOSTILITY ON ALL SIDES. IT NEEDED PEACE TO PROCEED WITH NATIONAL RE-CONSTRUCTION AND UNIFICATION.

8. YOUNG SAID THAT ANGOLA'S SOCIALISM WAS NOT A PROBLEM FOR THE U.S. THE U.S. WAS CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE GROUPS WHICH SINCE 1975 HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE U.S. WAS ALSO VERY CONCERNED OVER THE USE OF ANGOLAN TERRITORY FOR THE DESTABILIZATION OF ZAIRE. ALTHOUGH ANGOLA MIGHT REGARD THE GUERRILLAS AS AN INTERNAL MATTER, THE CONFLICTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA INEVITABLY WERE BECOMING INTERNATIONALIZED. THEREFORE, IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE IN ANGOLA'S INTEREST TO SEE THE NAMIBIA MATTER SETTLED AND SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES MOVED FROM ITS BORDER. THE WESTERN FIVE'S PROPOSALS OFFERED A WAY TO DOING THIS. SIMILARLY IF PEACE COULD BE BROUGHT TO ZAIRE, ANGOLA'S SECURITY WOULD BE ENHANCED.

9. AMBASSADOR YOUNG SAID THAT WHILE HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SOVIETS WERE TRYING TO DO IN AFRICA, THE U.S. WAS COMMITTED TO ASSISTING AFRICAN NATIONS DEVELOP ECONOMICALLY AND ACHIEVE STABILITY. THIS ASSISTANCE WOULD BE PROVIDED ON AFRICAN TERMS. THE U.S. STILL WANTS TO COOPERATE PEACEFULLY, BUT ITS EFFORTS SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS WEAKNESS. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE STALEMATE.

10. AMBASSADOR YOUNG POINTED OUT THAT MODERATE AFRICAN LEADERS WERE WARNING THE U.S. ABOUT THE CUBANS AND RUSSIANS, AND URGING THAT THE U.S. ACT TO COUNTER THEIR INTERVENTION. HE OUTLINED THE SPECTER OF A DEEP SPLIT IN
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THE OAU OVER THE ISSUE, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE ANGOLANS MIGHT HELP AVOID CONFLICT AND ENHANCE THEIR OWN SECURITY BY COOPERATING WITH THOSE SEEKING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN NAMIBIA. NASCIMENTO AGREED WITH THE DESIRABILITY OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN NAMIBIA, BUT RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEMS THAT SWAPO HAD WITH THE PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS.

11. AMBASSADOR MCHENRY OUTLINED THE SITUATION SURROUNDING NAMIBIA AS HE SAW IT AND ASKED HOW THE ANGOLANS PERCEIVED FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS. NASCIMENTO HAD NO SUGGESTIONS BUT ASSERTED THAT, WHILE ANGOLA WOULD SUPPORT SWAPO'S DECISIONS, IT WOULD BE "WORKING WITH" SWAPO AND WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET WITH THE FRONTLINE TO DISCUSS A NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT. MCHENRY URGED THAT INITIATIVES WERE NEEDED TO BREAK THE EXISTING VICIOUS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND REPRESSION. NASCIMENTO FELT THAT TIME WAS NEEDED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

12. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONVERSATION, NASCIMENTO WARMLY THANKED THE U.S. FOR THE COURTEOUS RECEPTION AND SECURITY PROVIDED TO HIM DURING THIS, HIS FIRST, VISIT TO THE U.S.

13. COMMENT: THROUGHOUT THE FIRST HALF OF THE CONVERSATION, NASCIMENTO APPEARED RESERVED, PERHAPS EVEN TENSE, ALTHOUGH HE RELAXED SOMEWHAT TOWARD THE END. DURING THE DISCUSSIONS OF SHABA, HE MAINTAINED THE POSITION THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INVASION. HE EXPRESSED A DESIRE FOR CONTINUING COMMUNICATION WITH THE U.S. THERE WAS A SENSE OF HELPLESSNESS ABOUT NASCIMENTO. HE SEEMED RESIGNED TO ATTACKS BY SOUTH AFRICA AND ANGOLA'S INABILITY TO CONTROL ITS TERRITORY. IT WAS ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT ANGOLA NEEDED U.S. HELP IF IT WAS TO AVOID ALIGNMENT, I.E., DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVIETS. THIS IS THE SAME PLEA
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WE HAVE HEARD SINCE 1975. IT IS UTTERED WITHOUT BITTERNESS OR FRUSTRATION BUT CLEARLY A PLEA FOR HELP.

YOUNG UNQUOTE VANCE

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